

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

### AMENDMENT

Please make the following amendments:

#### IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 22 without prejudice to filing one or more divisional applications.

Please amend claims 1, 2, and 19 to read as follows:

1. (Twice amended) A Peptide containing less than 50 amino acids, comprising at least one dimer of the type XG, wherein X stands for a N<sup>G</sup>-mono- or N<sup>G</sup>-N<sup>G</sup>-dimethylated arginine, asymmetrical dimethyl arginine, or N<sup>G</sup>-N<sup>G</sup>-dimethylated arginine, symmetrical dimethyl arginine, that is specifically recognized by antibodies present in sera from patients with systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), and wherein said antibodies are specifically associated with SLE; and with said methylation being crucial for the recognition of the peptide by said antibodies.
2. (Amended) The peptide according to claim 1 comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO 1, SEQ ID NO 2, SEQ ID NO 3, SEQ ID NO 4, SEQ ID NO 5, SEQ ID NO 6, SEQ ID NO 7, SEQ ID NO 8, SEQ ID NO 9, SEQ ID NO 10, SEQ ID NO 11, SEQ ID NO 12, SEQ ID NO 13, SEQ ID NO 14, SEQ ID NO 15 or, an analog of any of SEQ ID NO 1-15, wherein the analog has an amino acid sequence identical to the respective SEQ ID NO except that the analog comprises conservative amino acid substitutions at one or more positions, where the conservative amino acid substitutions are selected from the following: Thr, Gly, or Asn substituted for Ser; His, Lys, Glu, or Gln substituted for Arg; Ile, Met, Phe, Val, or Tyr substituted for Leu; Ala, Thr, or Gly substituted for Pro; Pro, Ser, Ala, Gly, His, or Gln substituted for Thr; Pro, Gly, or Thr substituted for Ala; Met, Ile, Tyr, Phe, or Leu substituted for Val; Ala, Thr, Pro, or Ser substituted for Gly; Met, Leu, Phe, Val, or Tyr substituted for Ile; Met, Tyr, Ile, Leu, Trp, or Val substituted for Phe; Phe, Trp, Met, Ile, Val, or Leu substituted for Tyr; Ser, Thr, or Met substituted for Cys; Gln, Arg, Lys, Glu, or Thr substituted for His; Glu, His, Lys, Asn, Thr, or Arg substituted for Gln; Asp, Ser, or Gln substituted for Asn; Arg, Glu, Gln, or His substituted for Lys; Asn, Glu, or Gln substituted for Asp; Gln, Asp, Lys, Asn, His or Arg substituted for Glu; and Ile, Leu, Phe, or Val substituted for Met.